

LIBERAL ARTS STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL ASPIRATIONS IN DELHI NCT: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF GENDER AND LOCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the entrepreneurial intentions (EI) of Delhi NCT undergraduate liberal arts students, paying special attention to the impact of geography and gender. Statistical methods such as Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Multiple Linear Regression, and t-tests were used to evaluate data gathered from six universities with liberal arts departments. The results are intended to guide the creation of focused initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship among this sometimes disregarded student population by educating educators and policymakers on how demographic factors influence entrepreneurial aspirations.

Keywords

Entrepreneurial Intentions, Liberal Arts, Gender, Location, Urban-Rural Divide, Delhi NCT

Introduction

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that entrepreneurship is a major force behind innovation, economic expansion, and social advancement. Research on entrepreneurial intentions (EI) has typically focused on students studying business or STEM, where there is a stronger correlation between technical proficiency and entrepreneurial success. But students studying liberal arts subjects—like literature, history, and the arts—have a unique set of skills, such as critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and cultural literacy, that can provide new insights and creative methods in the field of entrepreneurship.

Delhi NCT offers an exciting setting for examining entrepreneurship potential because of its dynamic blend of urban sophistication and historical depth. The region offers a unique context for investigating the ways in which different demographic characteristics impact entrepreneurial aspirations because of its diversified socio-cultural fabric and extensive variety of educational institutions. Locality and gender are two of these characteristics that are very important. Access to networks, mentorship, and resources is frequently influenced by gender dynamics, and exposure to entrepreneurial prospects and the larger economic ecosystem can be significantly impacted by a student's location, whether they are from an urban or rural area.

Even while entrepreneurship is becoming more and more important in knowledge-based economies, there is still a significant lack of research on liberal arts students' entrepreneurial goals, particularly in emerging nations like Delhi NCT. The present study fills this gap by concentrating solely on the ways in which gender and location affect these students' EI. Gender-based disparities in entrepreneurial goals could, on the one hand, be a reflection of larger cultural norms and expectations that either support or restrict male and female students' aspirations. However, locality may be a measure of exposure to urban entrepreneurial ecosystems, with urban students having more access to networks, resources, and role models, while rural students may acquire a unique kind of resilience and creative thinking when faced with fewer opportunities.

Through the examination of these factors, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which geography and gender interact to influence liberal arts undergraduates' entrepreneurial inclinations in Delhi NCT. The knowledge acquired is essential for both academic discussion and real-world policymaking. A more inclusive and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem can be promoted by creating specialized educational initiatives and support systems that cater to the particular difficulties and capitalize on the distinctive advantages of various demographic groups.

Research Question: How do geography and gender affect Delhi NCT liberal arts students' aspirations to start their own business?

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship has been widely recognized as a critical driver of economic growth, innovation, and societal transformation. In the context of liberal arts students, entrepreneurship is often seen as a pathway to empower individuals with critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The relationship between liberal arts education, gender, and location has been an emerging focus in research, especially in diverse urban settings like Delhi NCT. This literature review synthesizes recent academic studies that examine the entrepreneurial aspirations of liberal arts students, with a focus on the impact of gender and location.

Several studies have examined the entrepreneurial intentions and aspirations of university students, emphasizing the role of education in shaping these ambitions. According to Shah and Anwar (2018), liberal arts education fosters critical thinking and creativity, which are essential for entrepreneurial pursuits. However, students from liberal arts backgrounds often face challenges in accessing the necessary resources and support systems to actualize their entrepreneurial aspirations.

Moreover, a study by Bhardwaj and Verma (2020) on Indian universities highlighted that entrepreneurial intentions among students vary widely based on the field of study. Liberal arts students, in particular, tend to exhibit a higher level of creativity and risk-taking potential, though they may lack the business acumen typically associated with entrepreneurial success.

The intersection of gender and entrepreneurship has been extensively explored in the literature. According to a study by Sahay and Gupta (2017), female students in Delhi NCT, particularly in the liberal arts field, face unique barriers, such as cultural expectations and limited access to entrepreneurial networks. This gender gap in entrepreneurial aspirations is consistent with findings from Ghosh and Chattopadhyay (2019), who reported that female students are less likely to perceive entrepreneurship as a viable career path due to societal constraints and limited role models.

In contrast, male students often benefit from stronger societal support for entrepreneurial endeavors, particularly in urban settings like Delhi. However, Gupta and Sharma (2021) found that there has been a significant increase in the entrepreneurial aspirations of female students in liberal arts programs in Delhi, thanks to increasing awareness and supportive governmental initiatives aimed at promoting women entrepreneurship.

Location plays a significant role in shaping the entrepreneurial aspirations of students, especially in metropolitan areas like Delhi. According to Sharma and Arora (2022), the urban environment of Delhi offers better access to resources such as venture capital, networking opportunities, and entrepreneurial mentorship, which positively influence the entrepreneurial ambitions of students. However, location-based factors such as the density of competitive industries, infrastructure, and access to markets can also create challenges for aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly for liberal arts students who may not have the same business-specific knowledge as their counterparts in more specialized fields.

A study by Rani and Kumar (2019) on entrepreneurship in Delhi's educational institutions found that students in liberal arts programs are increasingly inclined toward social entrepreneurship, driven by the urban challenges they encounter. These students often seek to address societal issues through innovative business models, thus demonstrating a unique alignment between their academic focus and entrepreneurial goals.

The interaction between gender and location in shaping entrepreneurial intentions has been a key focus in recent studies. According to Sharma and Rani (2020), while urban areas like Delhi provide better opportunities for entrepreneurship, women still face structural and cultural barriers that hinder their full participation in entrepreneurial activities. In contrast, male students, regardless of their academic background, are more likely to be encouraged to pursue entrepreneurship due to societal norms and greater access to resources.

Moreover, Kumar and Patil (2021) suggest that liberal arts students in Delhi, irrespective of gender, tend to exhibit higher entrepreneurial intentions when exposed to supportive initiatives such as incubators, mentorship programs, and networking events specifically designed for young entrepreneurs. However, the study emphasized that female students continue to face more significant barriers in utilizing these resources compared to their male counterparts.

Support systems, such as mentorship, access to funding, and entrepreneurial networks, are crucial in translating entrepreneurial aspirations into action. A study by Sood and Kapoor (2020) highlighted that liberal arts students in Delhi NCT often face challenges in finding the right kind of support for their entrepreneurial ventures, particularly in terms of business guidance. The lack of a robust support system further exacerbates the gender gap in entrepreneurial activity.

However, initiatives by organizations like the Delhi Government's Startup Policy (2020) have been shown to encourage both male and female liberal arts students to engage in entrepreneurial ventures. A report by Puri and Bhaskar (2021) notes that targeted government schemes have significantly increased female participation in entrepreneurial activities, particularly in socially-conscious businesses that align with the values of liberal arts education.

From literature review its evident that entrepreneurial aspirations of liberal arts students in Delhi NCT are shaped by a complex interplay of gender and location factors. While liberal arts education fosters creativity and critical thinking, the realization of entrepreneurial ambitions is often hindered by gender-specific barriers and the competitive urban landscape. However, recent trends indicate a growing awareness and support for female entrepreneurs, especially with the advent of policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equity in entrepreneurship. Future research should continue to explore how specific interventions—such as mentorship programs and startup ecosystems—can further close the gender gap and empower liberal arts students in urban centers like Delhi to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations.

Methodology

Design and Sampling of the Research

The association between liberal arts students' entrepreneurial goals and demographic characteristics was investigated using a quantitative research approach. The following information was gathered using a standardized questionnaire:

- Demographic Data: Location (rural vs. urban) and gender.
- A series of Likert-scale items intended to gauge students' preparedness for entrepreneurial endeavors are used to measure their entrepreneurial intentions.
- Basic sociodemographic information that gives context for evaluating the results is known as a contextual Variable.

Six colleges and institutions in Delhi NCT offered liberal arts undergraduate programs, making up the target population. Using stratified sampling, the sample was guaranteed to be representative of both location and gender categories. Statistical power analysis was used to estimate a sample size of roughly 300 students in order to guarantee the robustness and dependability of the findings.

Data Gathering

To increase reach and participation, data were gathered through a combination of online and in-person questionnaires. Every participant received an explanation of the study's objectives, and ethical guidelines—including informed consent and confidentiality guarantees—were closely adhered to. Before the full-scale survey was conducted, the structured questionnaire was pilot-tested to make sure the questions were clear and improved.

Data Interpretation

An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions based on gender and location.

Table 1: Gender comparison of entrepreneurial intention

Gender	Number	SD	Mean	t value
Male	228	10.5	55.25	- 5.6
Female	372	12.5	60.5	

Gender-Based Results: The t-test results showed a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in entrepreneurial intentions between male and female students, with males showing higher mean scores.

Table 2: Locale comparison of entrepreneurial intention

Locale	Number	SD	Mean	t value
Urban	375	65	15.5	4.9
Rural	225	58	18.5	

Location-Based Results: A significant difference ($p < 0.05$) was also observed between students from urban and rural backgrounds. Urban students had higher entrepreneurial intention scores, possibly due to greater access to entrepreneurial ecosystems, exposure, and resources.

Findings and Conclusion

Preliminary research indicates that Male and female students' entrepreneurial inclinations differ noticeably. Access to resources, cultural norms, and differing degrees of support for entrepreneurship could all be responsible for these discrepancies.

Students from cities seem to be more inclined to start their own business than their counterparts from rural locations. This pattern may be related to increased exposure to metropolitan entrepreneurial ecosystems, which offer networking opportunities, mentorship, and financial resources.

The findings are further nuanced by the interplay between gender and location. For example, urban female students may encounter distinct obstacles in contrast to their rural counterparts, highlighting the necessity for tailored assistance approaches. These revelations underscore the significance of taking into account both demographic aspects when formulating policies and initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship within the liberal arts setting.

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